A Synopsis of the Thesis,

JOURNEY FROM INNOCENCE TO EXPERIENCE: A THEMATIC STUDY OF *GYANPITH* WOMEN AWARDEES

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JOURNEY FROM INNOCENCE TO EXPERIENCE: A THEMATIC STUDY OF *JNANPITH* WOMEN AWARDEES

B. Outline of the Proposed Topic of Research

Introduction:

The present research work aims at making a thorough exploration and critical examination of vital themes in the selected literary Literature of *Jnanpith* awardees like Ashapurna Devi, Amrita Pritam, Mahadevi Verma, Qurratulain Hyder, Mahasweta Devi, Indira Goswami, Pratibha Ray and Krishna Sobti. The said research study will explore and examine an archetypal journey of human beings from innocence to experience, ignorance to knowledge, veil to vision, hatredness to love, slavery to freedom with a thorough study of the selected masterpieces like *Pratham Pratishruti (The First Promise,* 1965*)* by Ashapurna Devi; *Kagaz Te Canvas* (The Paper and the Canvas), a book of collection of poems and a groundbreaking novel, *Pinjar (The Skeleton)* by Amrita Pritam; *Yama* (1940), *AtitaKeCalcitra (The Moving Frames of the Past),Smrti Ki Rekhayem (The Lines of Memory), and Dipshikha (The flame of an Earthen Lamp)*by Mahadevi Verma; *Aakhir-e-Shab be Hamsafar (Travellers Unto the Night),* and *AagKa Darya (River of Fire)*by QurratulainHyder; *AranyerAdhikar* (*Right to the Forest*), *Breast Stories*, *Mother of 1084*, *Rudali*by Mahasweta Devi; *Mamare Dhara Tarowal Aru Dukhan Upanyas (The Rusty Sword and Two Other Novels), Dantal HatirUnyeKhovaHaoda (The Moth-eaten Howdah of the Tusker),* and *Adhalekha Dastabez (An Unfinished Autobiography)*by Indira Goswami; *Punyatoya* (1979), *Nilatrushna* (1981), *Silapadma* (1983), *Yagnaseni* (1985), *Uttaramarga* (1988), *Mahamoha* (1997) *Pruthakaiswara* (1991), *Bhagabamradesha* (1991), *Mokshya* (1996) (all short stories) by Pratibha Ray; *ZindaRukh (The Living Tree*, 1979), and *Zindaginămā (Chronicles of Life,* 1979*)* by Krishna Sobti. The present study will critically appreciate the thematic significance and impact of *Jnanpith* women awardees exploring the thought-experiment that the award not only honors individual excellence and lifelong literary contributions

but also enhances the recipient's visibility and recognition, thereby promoting literature and literacy in India. It will also examine the role *Jnanpith* women awardees in cultural integration studying their vital literature in fostering cultural unity and appreciation among India's diverse linguistic and literary traditions, supporting the richness and diversity of Indian literature and life un to the last.

Literature Review:

The Jnanpith Award was instituted by Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain. He is the founder of Bharatiya *Jnanpith*, a research and cultural institute founded in 1944. He wanted to establish an award that would recognize and celebrate the outstanding contributions of Indian writers. This award is felicitated only to the Indian authors (Indian nationals). It is given only for the literary works of any of the 22 languages included under the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution. In 2019, Amitav Ghosh became the first English writer to receive this award. Once a language gets the award, it is not eligible for the award for the next two years. The award recipient has a citation, a bronze replica of Vagdevi (Goddess Saraswathi), and 11 lakh rupees. This award is not conferred posthumously. G.Sankara Kurup (Malayalam Poet) was the first Indian author to receive the Jnanpith Award for his anthology *Odakkuzhal.* The first woman awardee was Ashapurna Devi, who was awarded for her novel *Pratham Pratisruti.*

Exploration of the tradition of *Jnanpith* Award by women writers is quite relevant regarding the present study. During the period, 1965 to 2023 fifty male writers and only eight women writers have bagged *Jnanpith* Award. Less known, less taught, less well-taught, less criticized, and more readily dismissed by male critics, this tradition of *Jnanpith* Award by women is quite rich, diverse, varied, often neglected and out of the domain of the phallocentric critical scrutiny. A survey of that tradition will not only testify and justify the greatness of women *Jnanpith* Awardees as literary artists but it will also establish a *raisonde'tre* of the present study. *Jnanpith* Award and Indian literature traditionally has been considered in Lacanian terms a male centered

literature meant for phallocentric values. The truth behind this tradition can be verified over most of the history of *Jnanpith* Award by inspecting any table of contents or readership survey. Actually women have been a part of *Jnanpith* Award since its beginning, but their role until recent times was relatively minor, barring a few exceptions. In the literary history of *Jnanpith* Award, women writers are deliberately neglected. In fact SF history is full of politics and power and a matter of choice. Louise Berinkow (1974:3) very aptly unveils the politics in literary history as: "Literary history is a matter of power, not justice…what is commonly called literary history is actually a record of choices. Which writers have survived their time and which have not depends upon who noticed them and chose to record the notice. Which works have become part of the canon of literature, read, thought about, discussed, and which have disappeared depends, in the same way, on the process of selection and power to select." Male and female writers alike often wrote of worlds vastly different from our own in which women still pursued, without questioning only traditional roles as wives and mothers. Viewed the tradition of *Jnanpith* Award and Indian literature from the women's point of view one understands that in spite of the rich contribution of women writers this kind of the incredible tradition of *Jnanpith* Award still suffers the malady of phallocentric subsumption. This kind of phallocentric perspective created an inequality between male and female in both life and literature. A precise survey of the eight women *Jnanpith* Awardees is quite relevant to establish a *raisonde'tre* of the present study.

Krishna Sobti :

Krishna Sobti (18 Feb, 1925 - 25 Jan, 2019) is the least 'intellectually committed' and perhaps the single-most spectacular novelist in modern Hindi. Her style and idiom impart an authentic touch to whatever theme and situation she portrays. The essence of her creativity lies in her honesty and eagerness to reach the truth and to look into things, rather than at them. Sobti guards her freedom as a writer and as an individual zealously. "You can take liberties with yourself only if you create a large space for yourself, a vast sky," she says

emphasizing the writer's neutrality in that space. Empathy towards her characters is a notable feature of her writings. Krishna Sobti also writes under the name Hashmat and has published *Hama Hashamat*, a compilation of pen portraits of writers and friends. She also had a brief brush with the audio-visual medium, having served as a consultant for *Buniyad*, a television serial on partition. She received the Sahitya Akademi Award for her novel *Zindaginama*. "Suffused with the ethos and ambience of pre-partition rural Punjab, this novel of epic dimensions is a visual and dramatic recall of early memories in episodic form". Nand Kishore Naval, a critic, has referred to it as the most comprehensive, sympathetic, and sensitive treatment in Hindi literature of the peasants since Premchand. Her other novels are *Dara sebichuri*, *MitroMarajani*, *Surajmukhi andhere ke*. Some of her well-known short stories are *Nafisa, SikkaBadalgaya, Badalomkeghere. Sobtiekasohabata* includes her major selected works. Sobti has also received the Shiromani Award in 1981 and Hindi Academy Award in 1982. She received the *Jnanpith* Award for her contribution to Indian literature in 2017. There is something absolutely inspired about the hymn-like evocations of folk life, history and culture in her rural novels and stories. Nothing that is alive escapes her attention, and she celebrates life everywhere in the living speech of the rural folk, in their unconscious poetry and their oral narrative and songs, in rivers and trees, in crops and seasons, in human loves and sorrows-above all, on the Punjab soil, at once the beloved and the great mother. Her magnum opus *ZindaRukh (The Living Tree*, 1979), which is the first and hitherto the only published part of *Zindaginămā (Chronicles of Life,* 1979*)*, requires an aesthetics of its own, a desi (native) aesthetics for which her novels themselves supply the components. *Zindaginama*is a miracle. One witnesses it and feels both humbled and greatly enriched. A great hymn to the soil of Punjab which it invokes in its complexity as well as totality, it contains it cosmogonic myths, its legends and lores, its history and traditions, its subtle tissues integrating its different communities, and its people whose behavior and style it determines and makes distinctive. The novel has chronicles of living beings, but it also has those of ghosts and spirits, mythical and legendary heroes and saints. As a

novel, *Zindaginama* is remarkably plural in its formal variety, and includes genres and modes as various as poetry, farce, tragedy, folklore, legends, visions, comedy, clowning, subversive parody, mimicry, modernist self-consciousness, political post-colonialism, feminism, self-reflexiveness and so on. In its present form, the novel ends sometime around 1917. That Shahni becomes a widow and reluctantly departs from her village in the wake of the Partition is depicted in a story in *BadlomkeGhere (Circles of Clouds),* but the chronicles of the intervening 30-odd years are to be the theme of the long awaited, elegiac sequels to *ZindaRukh*. Even as it is, the novel is simply the greatest thing to have happened to Hindi fiction.

Mahadevi Verma :

Mahadevi Verma (1907-1987), the 1942 year's *Jnanpith* awardees, Mahadevi Verma was born in middle class family in Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh. She spent her childhood in Indore, M. P. but was educated in Allahabad, where, later on, she established the 'Prayag Mahila Vidyapitha, promoting education of girls. She was active during the freedom struggle, and came into close contact with Gandhi, Nehru and other prominent leaders. The concept of freedom itself was always very dear to her. She was married in early age, but after the marriage, she never went back to live with her husband. Mahadevi remained totally devoted to poetry and her other creative pursuits which included painting in a romantic vein, and educational work. She toured, lectured, and was especially interested in the promotion of Hindi and other Indian languages. Mahadevi Verma is considered to be one of the four pillars of the celebrated romantic movement in modern Hindi poetry, called *Chayavada*, the other three being Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala', Jaishankar Prasad and Sumitranandan Pant. Although all the four belonged to the same movement, each of them had their own distinct voices and unique approaches both to poetry and prose. As one of the principal figures of the *Chhayavad* school of Hindi literature, her verse carries an intense underlying pathos. Some of her poetry includes Nihaar (1930), *Rashmi* (1932), *Niraja* (1934), and *Sandhyageet* (1936), all collected in *Yama* (1940). Varma's support for

women's rights runs throughout her prose writings, many of which appeared in *Chand*, a women's magazine, and were later compiled as a book, *Shrinkhlakikariyan* (1942; "Chains of Subjugation"). *Ateetkechalachitra* (1941; *Sketches from My Past*), a collection of short stories based on her interactions with women who touched her life during her stint as principal of a school for girls, is considered one of her best works. Other prominent works include *Smritikirekhaen* (1943; *A Pilgrimage to the Himalayas, and Other Silhouettes from Memory*), *Path kesaathi* (1956; "Companions in Travel"), and *Meraparivaar* (1971; "My Family"). Varma was honoured with the Padma Bhushan, one of India's highest honours, in 1956. For her contributions to Indian literature, she received the Jnanpith Award in 1982. Mahadevi wrote a fine, lucid, sensitive prose in her unmistakable style and for a large number of readers she is also known for her books of memoirs, *AtitaKeCalcitra (The Moving Frames of the Past)* and *Smrti Ki Rekhayem (The Lines of Memory)*. In her poetic career, and among her several collections, *Dipshikha (The flame of an Earthen Lamp)*has of special place. The book, consisting of 51 lyrics, has the maturity of expression and the deep lyrical mystic quality peculiar to Mahadevi. In fact, because of her mysticism, a movement called *Rahasyavada,*also arouse, along with *Chayavada*, and the emergence of *Rahasyavada* is mainly attributed in Mahadevi. However, in her long preface to *Dipshikha*, Mahadevi herself sums up these movements in the words: "The poet of *Chayavada* is indebted more to the 'Brahma' of philosophy, than to the metaphysic of religion, a 'Brahma' that achieves its wholeness in the fusion of the concrete and the abstract universes. The poet intuited the integral nature of life, in his heart he realized the mysterious feeling of beauty spread all over in nature, and, combining both of them, he produced a poetic vision which was able to hear the burden of various labels, such as naturism, heart-ismm, metaphysicalism, and mysticism." Mahadevi in her own right was deeply engrossed in Indian philosophy, Indian poetics and aesthetics, and had a rich knowledge of Sanskrit literature and our cultural heritage. This is quite evident from her preface to *Dipshikha* which reads like a treatise of Indian poetics and

aesthetics, apart from her answers to the vital questions of life, nature and art. Thus, not only the lyrics of *Dipshikha* but this preface also is very significant in conceptualizing the thought process of Mahadevi. Indeed, it is of a very high quality. She had an alert, independent mind and was eloquent in her speech as well. Humane to the core, Mahadevi's free flowing, yet restrained, language has no parallel in modern Hindi poetry. She has often been compared with St. Mira, because of her lyric quality and her deep devotional offerings to the Supreme One. In *Dipahikha*, too, Mahadevi talks of life, love, death, nature and the separation and reunion of the soul to its sole 'possessor'. The 'soul' is in constant search of its true identity and its true master. Her poetic diction is marked with a rare sensitivity, pictorial quality, and at times it seems that the poet-painter is eagerly painting on a wide canvas with fine strokes and colors, which are lighter in shades, yet vibrant. In her imagery, *dipa* (lamp), clouds, sky, wind, lightning, darkness and ocean keep coming back. In this setting or set of images, the lamp burns on, braving all odds, and thus becomes a metaphor for the soul, which is longing to be one with the lover-- the originator of all light. She has managed to paint the mystified destiny of this 'lamp'. She laments, at times wails, and other times rejoices in the 'separation', as she finds that the light of the lamp is inseparable from the 'lover', who is watching it burning, from somewhere. He may not be seen, but he is there! *Dipshikha* literally means the light or flame of the burning earthen lamp. In this collection of poems, Mahadevi arrived at a fusion of poetry, painting, and music. In *Dipshikha*, her poetic sensibility has also become very refined. Well rhymed verses seem to pour out the agony, sorrow and pain of the soul, as well as the *ananda* (bliss). The mystic quality of Mahadevi also gains an intense emotional dimension. With her choice of words and images, Mahadevi really took her *Dipshikha* to the high altitudes of life and poetry.

Ashapurna Devi :

One of the most outstanding woman writers of modern Bengali literature, Ashapurna Devi (8 Jan, 1909-13 July, 1995) was born in Begumpur

in the district of Hooghly. She became the seminal woman to win the *Jnanpith* award in the year, 1976 and was honoured for the novel, *Pratham Pratishruti (The First Promise)* published in 1965. She was awarded the Padmashri, D.Litt. by the University of Jabalpur, for a critical exploration and examination of the sexist mindset of men and gender discrimination in her literary works. She had her education at home and started writing poems, short stories and novels at an early age. Her marriage caused no hindrance to her writing which she continued with unabated zeal for more than five decades. She has given a true and realistic picture of the middle-class Bengali family in and around Calcutta strictly regulated by the dictates of custom and tradition. Women characters are more prominent in her writings, some of whom, after prolonged sufferings, rise in revolt against age-old injustices and tyranny of a male-dominating society. *Pratham Pratisruti* is a story meticulously built up on a social structure that is based on superstition, prejudice and endless injustice to women. Satyabati, a housewife, turns rebel and takes a bold stand against all the misdeeds around. Thus she represents the protest by millions of Indian women. The novel also throws light on the structural changes the society should undergo to make it more rational and democratic. With such super craftsmanship, realistic dialogue and charming narration, it lays claim to being one of the foremost novels of the present-day Bengali literature.

Mahasweta Devi:

Considered one of the boldest of Bengali women fiction-writers since late 1950s, Mahasweta Devi (14 Jan, 1926-2eight July, 2016), wrote novels and stories based on historical subjects as also topics of social and political relevance. She was one of India's foremost literary figures from the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries—a writer and social activist in equal right. Author of numerous novels, essays and short stories, she received the Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary honour, in 1996. She was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1997 for her 'compassionate crusade through art and activism to claim for tribal peoples a just and honorable place in India's national life'. Among her major works are, *AranyerAdhikar* (*Right to the*

Forest), *Breast Stories*, *Mother of 1084*, *Rudali*, etc. Her works mainly contained the narratives of the exploitation of tribal communities especially women. She is a 'committed' writer in the sense that she has brought out the rebellious spirit of the tortured people of the past and the present with a rare blending of facts with fiction. Familiarity with the documents, fidelity to her experiences and, above all, her acquaintance with folk-life and language of Bengal, mark her fiction as human documents of lasting value. She is the daughter of Manish Ghatak, poet and fiction-writer. Though the basic historical documents of the rebellion are themselves interesting, the compact fictional form of *AranyerAdhikar* (*Right to the Forest*) is more charged with emotion and suspense. True, the novelist has taken liberties with some of the historical facts and added a few characters to give a clear picture of Birsa's heroic stand. Mahasweta Devi is faithful to the main storyline and has used her imaginative skill to make the relatives and associates of Birsa psychologically very much alive and convincing. The thrill of the story with its tensed up characters with all their individualities and the die-hard rebel's fight-to-the-last attitude make the novel a really tragic story where the failure of human effort becomes the spring-board for further action with stronger thrust.

Amrita Pritam :

Amrita Pritam (31 Aug, 1919 - 31 Oct, 2005) was considered the first prominent woman Punjabi poet, novelist, and essayist. She was the leading 20th century poet of the Punjabi language, who is equally loved on both the sides of the India-Pakistan border. With a career spanning over six decades, she produced over 100 books, of poetry, fiction, biographies, essays, a collection of Punjabi folk songs and an autobiography that were translated into several Indian and foreign languages. Known as the most important voice for the women in Punjabi literature, in 1956, she became the first woman to win the Sahitya Akademi Award for her magnum opus, a long poem, *Sunehe* (Messages). She received the Bhartiya Jnanpith, one of India's highest literary awards in 1982 for *KagazTe Canvas* (The Paper and the Canvas), a book of collection of poems. The Padma-Shri came her way in

1969 and finally, Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian award in 2004, and in the same year she was honoured with India's highest literary award, given by the Sahitya Akademi (India's Academy of Letters), the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship given to the "immortals of literature" for lifetime achievement. Amrita Pritam, born in Gujranwala, Punjab, in 1917, shifted to Lahore after her marriage to a businessman, Pritam Singh. As a result, her poetry contains the best Punjab literature could offer: a synthesis of the scent of earth, the psyche of a woman imprisoned by the small-town orthodox ideas in which she grew up, and of a liberated woman who found her shackles falling off her body and soul in the cosmopolitan Lahore and then Delhi. The years immediately after Independence, accompanied by the blood-soaked Partition of the country in which Punjab and Bengal were the worst hit, are rightfully known as 'Amrita Pritam-Mohan Singh Era' of Punjabi literature. Amrita Pritam and Mohan Singh are the most revered names in Punjabi poetry of that liberated era when horizons expanded beyond the traditional poetry of love with an invisible God. They talk of human beings, their pains and passions, their pleasures and liberation, their entangled and not-too-entangled personal relationships. With her first novel *Doctor Dev* in the late sixties, Amrita Pritam branched off into prose as well. Her prose naturally has an unmistakable poetic and lyrical quality about it which made it so endearing not only to her Punjabi readers but also to her Hindi readers. *Pinjar(The Skeleton)* was her second novel, published in 1970. Earlier Amrita Pritam had written an immortal poem on the tragedy of the Partition, "Ajj Akhan Waris Shah Noo" (Waris Shah Today) which became almost a legend and was sung with great pathos all over the Punjabi-speaking areas on both sides of the border. Waris Shah's legendary poem *Heer-Ranjha,* depicting the love-tale of the legendary pair, is an essential part of Punjabi culture and psyche. Amrita Pritam hailed Waris Shah in her poem, asking him, challenging him to write the tear-soaked tales of thousands of Punjabi girls, the innumerable Heers who paid a heavy toll during the Partition– whose bodies and souls were full of oozing scars. *Pinjar* is in a way the tale of the Partition, with a difference. It is a very touching, deeply emotional and extremely humane ending. People are like

trees and plants. They either die when uprooted from their soil, or they take new roots in another soil if replanted with love and care. Love surpasses all filial commitments and makes the person liberated and strong, the way it did strengthen Pooro. Bonds of love have made her independent and free. This is one of Amrita Pritam's most powerful novels, and is as poignant a tale of the Partition as Saadat Manto's Urdu stories on that black era of Indian history.

Qurratulain Hyder :

Qurratulain Hyder (20 Jan, 1927-21 Aug, 2007) is a trendsetter in Urdu fiction. She began writing at a time when the novel was yet to establish itself as a serious genre in the poetry-oriented world of Urdu literature. She lifted it out of its stagnation, divested it of its obsession with fantasy, romance and facile realism. She offered it extraordinary range and depth and brought to its ambit, hitherto unexplored terrains of human thought and sensibility. A prolific writer, she has so far written some twelve novels and novellas, four collections of short stories and has done a significant volume of translations of classics. She received the *Jnanpith* Award on her later novel, *Aakhir-e-Shab be Hamsafar (Traveler's Unto the Night).*The narrative devices used in *Aag Ka Darya (River of Fire)* are broadly those of the stream-of- consciousness technique. The streams of the characters' thoughts move freely from one epoch to another and have their *raison d'etre* in their effectiveness to build up a cohesive picture of Indian ethos over the ages. The recurrent symbols of the river and the circle facilitate the sense of movement and continuity. Time itself assumes the dimension of a character and seems to participate in the action of the novel. The language used in the novel has great plasticity, changing registers with the change of epoch, In terms of technique, range and sweep, the novel is a tour de force in Urdu and possibly in Indian fiction as a whole.

Dr. Indira Goswami :

Acclaimed as perhaps the greatest woman novelist in Assam today, and a leading story-writer in the Assamese language, Mamani Raisom Goswami popularly known as Dr. Indira Goswami, (14 Nov, 1941 - 29 Nov, 2011) has to her credit twenty-one books-- seven novels including *Mamare Dhara Tarowal*

Aru Dukhan Upanyas (The Rusty Sword and Two Other Novels), which won her the Sahitya Akademi Award (1982), and *Dantal Hatir Unye Khova Haoda (The Moth-eaten Howdah of the Tusker),* five collections of short stories, and an autobiography, *Adhalekha Dastabez (An Unfinished Autobiography).* In her bold novels, Ms. Goswami expresses, in powerful narrative, the individual's passionate urge to follow his or her aspirations in a rigid society bound by inhuman exploitative bonds and consequent conflict moving inexorably towards an explosive climax. The background to this story of grim frustration and tragic waste is the countryside still ruled by feudal lords-the Brahmin *Sattradhikaras*, the monastery heads, who are both spiritual preceptors and owners of vast tracts of land traditionally tilled by disciple-sharecroppers. Steeped in hoary customs and superstitions, brahmin girls get married before the age of puberty, many are widowed at a tender age, and subjected to inhuman rigours. The *sattra* (monastery) ruined in recent years due to opium-trade is at the crossroads. While the *Sattradhikara* families are struggling against decay and the spectre of poverty, the disciple-sharecroppers led by communists begin a militant struggle against their landlords. And the modern liberal ideas of the hero get no favorable response from either his own custom-bound society or the communist-led peasantry. A ruthless exposure of the inhuman austerities and cruelties perpetrated on brahmin widows in an orthodox society and of its outdated fossilised attitudes towards love, marriage and widowhood, *DantalHatirUnyeKhovaHaoda (The Moth-eaten Howdah of the Tusker)* impresses one as an exceptionally bold novel where social documentation rises to heights of poetry and passion. The novel written in the author-narrator technique is a store-house of memorable incidents, vivid scenic details, rich folklore and powerful symbolic overtones—'the moth-eaten howdah' of the title itself is an apt symbol of decaying institution. By any standards a classic in modern Indian fiction, the novel has immense power to move its readers to profound pity and terror.

Pratibha Ray:

Perhaps one of the most prolific Oriya women writers, Pratibha Ray (born 21 January 1944) has immensely enriched the modern Oriya literature by her pioneering short stories and novels. Her works not only depict the urbane milieu of Orissan culture but also delve deeply into the life of tribal communities. She has successfully woven the different aspects of tribal life in her novels like Bhagavamradesha. A lecturer by profession for more than 21 years, she has been conferred the Orissa Sahitya Akademi Award, Moortidevi Award by Bharatiya Jnanpith, Saptarshi Award, etc. Her works have been translated into English and other Indian languages and she has represented the literary delegation to Russia, U.S.A., U.K., Australia and Bangladesh through the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR). Her major worksare : *Punyatoya* (1979), *Nilatrushna* (1981),*Silapadma* (1983), *Yagnaseni* (1985), *Uttaramarga* (1988), *Mahamoha* (1997) (all novels), *Pruthakaiswara* (1991), *Bhagabamradesha* (1991), *Mokshya* (1996) (all short stories). Apart from her literary works she has written primers on education and translated Hindi works into English. She lives in Bhubaneswar and presently is a member of Orissa Public Service Commission, Cuttack.

Gaps in the Existing Research:

It focuses on the representation of women *Jnanpith* awardees and their selected literature. It will explore and examine gaps in the existing research in respect of gender gaps. During 1965 to 2023 fifty male and only eight women writers have bagged *Jnanpith* Award. It will study sexual politics, textual politics and politics of interpretations in respect of the literary Literature by women *Jnanpith* awardees.

Statement of the Problem:

- What are the most possible antidote and panacea to the diabolic effects of sexism, *i. e.* discrimination based on biological sex, genderism, *i. e.* discrimination based on socially constructed gender, casteism, *i. e.* discrimination based on castes and other discriminations based on ideological hegemonies as effectively fictionalized by women *Jnanpith* awardees.

- Literary history is a matter of power, not justice. What is commonly called literary history is actually a record of choices which writers have survived their time and which have not depends upon who noticed them and chose to record the notice. Which works have become part of the canon of literature, read, thought about, discussed, and which have disappeared depends, in the same way, on the process of selection and power to select.

Scope of the Research Work:

The present research work aims at making a thorough exploration and critical examination of vital themes in the selected literary Literature of *Jnanpith* awardees like Ashapurna Devi, Amrita Pritam, Mahadevi Verma, Qurratulain Hyder, Mahasweta Devi, Indira Goswami, Pratibha Ray and Krishna Sobti. The said research study will explore and examine an archetypal journey of human beings from innocence to experience with a thorough study of *PrathamPratishruti (The First Promise*, 1965*)* by Ashapurna Devi; *Kagaz Te Canvas* (The Paper and the Canvas), a book of collection of poems and a groundbreaking novel, *Pinjar (The Skeleton)* by Amrita Pritam; *Yama* (1940), *AtitaKeCalcitra (The Moving Frames of the Past),Smrti Ki Rekhayem (The Lines of Memory), and Dipshikha (The flame of an Earthen Lamp)*by Mahadevi Verma; *Aakhir-e-Shab be Hamsafar (Travellers Unto the Night),* and *AagKa Darya (River of Fire)*by QurratulainHyder; *AranyerAdhikar* (*Right to the Forest*), *Breast Stories*, *Mother of 1084*, *Rudali*by Mahasweta Devi; *Mamare Dhara Tarowal Aru Dukhan Upanyas (The Rusty Sword and Two Other Novels)*, *Dantal HatirUnyeKhovaHaoda (The Moth-eaten Howdah of the Tusker)*, and *Adhalekha Dastabez (An Unfinished Autobiography)*by IndiraGoswami;*Punyatoya* (1979),*Nilatrushna* (1981), *Silapadma* (1983), *Yag naseni* (1985), *Uttaramarga* (1988), *Mahamoha* (1997)(allnovels), *Pruthakais wara* (1991), *Bhagabamradesha* (1991), *Mokshya* (1996) (all short stories) by Pratibha Ray; *ZindaRukh (The Living Tree*, 1979), and *Zindaginămă (Chronicles of Life*, 1979*)* by Krishna Sobti. There may be a few changes in the selected primary works regarding the thematic design of the said research work.

Relevance of the Research Work:

The *Jnanpith* award not only honors individual excellence and lifelong literary contributions but also enhances the recipient's visibility and recognition, thereby promoting literature and literacy in India. It will also examine the role *Jnanpith* women awardees in cultural integration studying their vital literature in fostering cultural unity and appreciation among India's diverse linguistic and literary traditions, supporting the richness and diversity of Indian literature and life un to the last. Literary exploration and criticism of Indian life in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* awardees have a national relevance applicable to the universal humanity. Therefore the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* awardees remains transnational uniting the entire world for positive growth and progress any time and any part of the world in general and Indian contexts in particular. If the aim of *Jnanpith* award is to promote human welfare then *Jnanpith* awardees by exploiting the contours of imagination remains substantial mode to the value of this cause. *Jnanpith* awardees have explored the Indian life pursued and rendered with the faculty of imagination. The developed nation of the First World has made material progress to the help of scientific exploration. The Third World countries like India need exploration of India from scientific and artistic perspectives for the betterment of humanity. The *Jnanpith* literary Literature as presented by women writers with the aid of thought-experimentation forged a path for the progress of the third world societies in general and the progress of minority groups, women, subalterns, the oppressed and downtrodden in particular. Criticism of India reflected in male tradition explores and exploits life as a mode of domination, destruction, and violence. Women, on the contrary, perceive the artistic and scientific truth as the means of reconstructing human society in positive terms. The space of dominance and violence of male-literary Literature is replaced by *Jnanpith* women awardees with space for harmony, co-ordination, and humaneness. By imagining other worlds and possible future, the *Jnanpith* women awardees has provided us a perpetual and timeless critical insights to view our present day situation with greater

detachment and perspective. Therefore the *raisonde'tre* of such a study does exist.

Significance of the Problem:

The said study will appreciate critically the literary works of the 06 Indian languages included under the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution. The present study will critically appreciate the thematic significance and impact of *Jnanpith* women awardees exploring the thought-experiment that the award not only honors individual excellence and lifelong literary contributions but also enhances the recipient's visibility and recognition, thereby promoting literature and literacy in India. It will also examine the role *Jnanpith* women awardees in cultural integration studying their vital literature in fostering cultural unity and appreciation among India's diverse linguistic and literary traditions, supporting the richness and diversity of Indian literature and life un to the last. Therefore the significance of such a study does exist.

Objectives of the Research:

- To explore and examine the vital and sublime themes in the selected literary Literature of *Jnanpith* awardees like Ashapurna Devi, Amrita Pritam, Mahadevi Verma, Qurratulain Hyder, Mahasweta Devi, Indira Goswami, Pratibha Ray and Krishna Sobti.
- To interpret and analyze an archetypal journey of human beings from innocence to experience, ignorance to knowledge, veil to vision, hatredness to love, slavery to freedom with a thorough study of the selected masterpieces by *Jnanpith* awardees.
- To appreciate the thematic significance and impact of *Jnanpith* women awardees exploring the thought-experiment that the award not only honors individual excellence and lifelong literary contributions but also enhances the recipient's visibility and recognition, thereby promoting literature and literacy in India.

- To examine the role *Jnanpith* women awardees in cultural integration studying their vital literature in fostering cultural unity and appreciation among India's diverse linguistic and literary traditions, supporting the richness and diversity of Indian literature and life un to the last.
- To revise concepts, thoughts as original, but which actually originate in specified ideologies and serve specific ends as fictionalized in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* women awardees.
- To restore a female perspective by extending knowledge about women's experiences and constitutions for culture as fictionalized in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* women awardees.
- To rethink the canon aiming at the discovery of texts written by women and also at the recovery and revaluation of women's experience as fictionalized in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* women awardees.
- To examine representations of women in literature as fictionalized in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* women awardees.
- To assess the power relations with a view to break them down, as a political act as fictionalized in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* women awardees.
- To recognize the role of language in making what is social and constructed as fictionalized in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* women awardees.
- To question whether men and women are essentially different because of phallic signification as fictionalized in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* women awardees.
- To explore the question of women's language, a scripture feminine, and whether it is available to men as fictionalized in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* women awardees.
- To re-reads psychoanalysis to further explore the issue of male and female identity as fictionalized in the literary Literature of *Jnanpith* women awardees.

Hypothesis:

- Indian women writers define the suppression and oppression of women.
- These novels deal with a variety of themes, but the main theme in their literature deal with women characters that shows the women's condition in society.
- Women have faced many problems such as gender discrimination, lack of freedom, oppression and suppression in the male dominated society.
- In the patriarchal society, women lost their identity.

Research Methodology:

The proposed research will apply the research methodology such as explorative, Interpretative, analytical, evaluative, comparative, and critically appreciate as per the norms of the Modern Language Association.

Chapter Scheme:

Sr. No.	Title of the Chapter
1.	Introduction: Exploring Literary World of *Jnanpith* Awardees
2.	Journey from Innocence to Experience in the selected literary text of Ashapurna Devi and Amrita Pritam
3.	Journey from Innocence to Experience in the selected literary text of Mahadevi Verma and Qurratulain Hyder
4.	Journey from Innocence to Experience in the selected literary text of Mahasweta Devi and Pratibha Ray
5.	Journey from Innocence to Experience in the selected literary text of Indira Goswami and Krishna Sobti
6.	Conclusion

The First Chapter: (Introduction)

It will introduce the topic with the overall aims and objectives of the said research study. It explores the key-terms such as *Jnanpith,* Indian literature, regional literature, translated literature etc. It discusses *Jnanpith* literature in respect of its origin and development with the help of various

approaches in detail. It will also highlight the writers concerned with *Jnanpith* award. It will discuss in detail the definition of *Jnanpith* literature with its history and development. It will take detailed review of *Jnanpith* literature in particular and Indian literature in general. It will explore the origin, birth, growth and development types and schools, traditions and disciplines and overall relevance of *Jnanpith* literature in respects of male and female traditions. It will thoroughly study the female tradition of *Jnanpith* literature in respect of place, role and contribution given by the writers like Ashapurna Devi, Amrita Pritam, Mahadevi Verma, Qurratulain Hyder, Mahasweta Devi, Indira Goswami, Pratibha Ray and Krishna Sobti. It wil take a detailed literature review of *Jnanpith* literature. It will also state the nature and structure of succeeding chapters.

The Second Chapter

It will explore and examine an archetypal journey from innocence to experience as fictionalized in Jnanpith literature in Bengali. It will study the autobiographical, biographical and the literary career of Ashapurna Devi with a critical survey of her literary and critical works. It will explore thoroughly *Pratham Pratishruti (The First Promise*, 1965*)* by Ashapurna Devi from various critical perspectives. It will thoroughly study the central themes fictionalized by Ashapurna Devi in her literary corpus. It will explore the thought experimentations in the *Jnanpith* literature by Ashapurna Devi. It will trace out the overall contribution of Ashapurna Devi to Indian literature.

It will study the major themes in the literary corpus of Amrita Pritam in Punjabi *with* special thematic study of *Kagaz Te Canvas* (The Paper and the Canvas), a book of collection of poems and a groundbreaking novel, *Pinjar (The Skeleton)* by Amrita Pritam. It will study the tradition of *Jnanpith* literature with special reference to the role, place and contribution of Amrita Pritam. It will study the autobiographical, biographical and the literary carrier of Amrita Pritam with a critical survey of her literary and critical works.

The Third Chapter

It will deal with two eminent writers named Mahadevi Varma for their exemplary literary contribution in Hindi. It will study the major themes in the literary corpus of Mahadevi Verma with special thematic study of *Yama* (1940), *Atita Ke Calcitra (The Moving Frames of the Past),Smrti Ki Rekhayem (The Lines of Memory), and Dipshikha (The flame of an Earthen Lamp)*by Mahadevi Verma. It will study the tradition of *Jnanpith* literature with special reference to the role, place and contribution of Mahadevi Verma. It will study the autobiographical, biographical and the literary carrier of Mahadevi Verma with a critical survey of her literary and critical works. It will thoroughly study the central themes fictionalized by Amrita Pritam in her literary corpus. It will explore the thought experimentations in the *Jnanpith* literature by Mahadevi Verma. It will trace out the overall contribution of Mahadevi Verma to Indian literature and life.

This chapter will also explore the vital themes reflected in *Jnanpith women* awardees' literature in reputed languages Urdu. It will further explore the thought experimentations in the *Jnanpith* literature by Qurratulain Hyder. It will trace out the overall contribution of Qurratulain Hyder to Indian literature. It will ponder over the major themes in the literary corpus of Qurratulain Hyder with special thematic study of *Aakhir-e-Shab be Hamsafar (Travellers Unto the Night),* and *AagKa Darya (River of Fire)*by Qurratulain Hyder.

The Fourth Chapter

It will study the major themes in the literary corpus of Mahasweta Devi with special thematic study of *Aakhir-e-Shab be Hamsafar (Travellers Unto the Night), AranyerAdhikar* (*Right to the Forest*), *Breast Stories, Mother of 1084, Rudali* by Mahasweta Devi. It will study the tradition of *Jnanpith* literature with special reference to the role, place and contribution of Mahasweta Devi. It will study the autobiographical, biographical and the

literary career of Mahasweta Devi with a critical survey of her literary and critical works. It will thoroughly study the central themes fictionalized by Mahasweta Devi in her literary corpus. It will explore the thought experimentations in the *Jnanpith* literature by Mahasweta Devi.

It will thoroughly study the central themes fictionalized by Indira Goswami in her literary corpus. It will explore the thought experimentations in the *Jnanpith* literature by Indira Goswami. will study the major themes in the literary corpus of Indira Goswami with special thematic study of *Mamare Dhara Tarowal Aru Dukhan Upanyas (The Rusty Sword and Two Other Novels)*, *Dantal HatirUnyeKhovaHaoda (The Moth-eaten Howdah of the Tusker),* and *Adhalekha Dastabez (An Unfinished Autobiography)* by Indira Goswami.

The Fifth Chapter

It will contemplate the major themes in the literary corpus of Pratibha Ray in Oriya with special thematic study of *Pruthakaiswara* (1991), *Bhagabamradesha* (1991), *Mokshya* (1996) by Pratibha Ray. It will thoroughly study the central themes fictionalized by Pratibha Ray in her literary corpus. It will explore the thought experimentations in the *Jnanpith* literature by Pratibha Ray.

It will explore the major themes in the literary corpus of Krishna Sobti with special thematic study of *ZindaRukh (The Living Tree*, 1979), and *Zindaginămă (Chronicles of Life,* 1979*)* by Krishna Sobti. It will study the autobiographical, biographical and the literary carrier of Krishna Sobti with a critical survey of her literary and critical works. It will thoroughly study the central themes fictionalized by Krishna Sobti in her literary corpus. It will explore the thought experimentations in the *Jnanpith* literature by Krishna Sobti.

The Sixth Chapter (Conclusion)

The concluding chapter will take a critical survey of the preceding chapters. It will also point out further research avenues in the area of *Jnanpith* literature. In addition to the critical summary of the proceeding chapters, this chapter will state the thesis statement of *Jnanpith* literature as fictionalized by women *Jnanpith* awardees. This chapter also highlights the central theme of whole work with supporting argument. It presents a comparative study of women *Jnanpith* awardees. It will also sums up the overall findings out of the entire study.

Outcome of Proposed Problem:

The research is emphasized the women's status in the novels of *Jnanpith* awardees such as Mahashweta Devi, Amrita Pritam, Ashapoorna Devi, Mahadevi Verma, Pratibha Ray, Qurratulain Hyder, Krishna Sobati and Indira Goswami so as to establish the presentation of the women's in the works of women *Jnanpith* awardees It will bring social change in the society and empowering women. The research is an attempt to create equality between men and women and change the attitude towards women.

Plan of Work (Time Schedule of Activity):

Year	Activity
I	Collection of references and their systematic arrangement as per the thematic plan or thesis.
II	An exploration, critical analysis representation and condition of women in the society with the special reference of *Jnanpith* Awardees.
III	Writing, editing, re-editing and submission of the final thesis.

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